

# Congressman Childers Achieves Major Accomplishments in First Year Serving North Mississippi

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May 20, 2009

Washington, DC - Today marks Congressman Travis Childers' (D-MS) first year anniversary serving hard working constituents in Mississippi's First Congressional District. Since being sworn in on May 20, 2008, the Congressman has hit the ground running to create jobs and improve the economy, restore fiscal responsibility and accountability, and rebuild and strengthen local communities.

"It is an honor to represent the fine people of Mississippi's First Congressional District," said Congressman Childers. "Times are tough, and I've been rolling up my sleeves and working hard over the past year to help get our economy back on track and provide relief for North Mississippi's hard working families. I am proud to continue serving the First District, and will continue to do everything I can to protect North Mississippi values, promote economic development, and ensure that our district has the funding and resources it needs to prosper."

Below is a list of Congressman Childers' major accomplishments during his first year in office:

### Improving Jobs & the Economy

- Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers serves on the House Financial Services Committee, where he looks out for North Mississippi's small businesses and work to ensure that the interests of the First District are protected when financial services legislation is drafted or up for consideration.

- Creating Jobs, Providing Tax Relief. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is estimated to directly impact 30,000 jobs statewide, including nearly 9,000 jobs in the First District. The legislation has also enacted one of the largest tax cuts in American history, benefiting 95% of Americans and an estimated one million Mississippi taxpayers. The Recovery Act has already invested millions of dollars in local infrastructure, education, and law enforcement. (enacted February 2009)

- Restoring Fiscal Responsibility. To help restore fiscal responsibility and a balanced budget, Congressman Childers voted twice against the Budget (June 2008, April 2009), helped block the 2010 congressional pay raise (February 2009), cosponsored legislation to reinstate pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) spending rules (April 2009), and voted twice against the \$700 billion financial bailout (September, October 2008).

- Demanding Accountability, Ending Fraud and Abuse. Congress recently passed the Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act (May 2009), as well as the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights, which provides tough new protections for consumers facing unfair and excessive credit card fees and rates (April 2009). The Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act, which strengthens federal law enforcement agencies' ability to fight financial fraud and sets up an investigative commission to help prevent another economic crisis, is now awaiting the President's signature (May 2009).

- Spurring Small Business Growth. The first piece of legislation Congressman Childers introduced was the Invest in Small Business Act (July 2008). A similar measure was included in the Recovery Act to encourage investment in small

businesses by cutting the capital gains tax (February 2009). To reduce health care costs for small businesses, the Congressman cosponsored the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) Act in both the 110th and 111th Congress (June 2008, May 2009). The Congressman also introduced legislation to reduce the estate tax, providing relief for hard working families and businesses in the face of our current economic crisis (April 2009).

### Strengthening Rural America

- House Agriculture Committee. Congressman Childers is the only member of the Mississippi delegation to serve on the House Committee, representing the agricultural interests of not only North Mississippi, but of the entire state.

- Establishing the Congressional Rural Caucus. Congressman Childers joined Congressman Adrian Smith (R-NE) in co-chairing and reestablishing the bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus, along with Vice-Chairs Glenn Thompson (R-PA) and Tim Walz (D-MN). The body serves to address challenges unique to rural communities like North Mississippi, and promote legislation which includes sound rural policies. As its first order of business, the Caucus sent a letter to the President calling for the White House to establish an Office of Rural Policy in response to the administration's creation of an Office of Urban Policy (March 2009).

- Protecting Base Acres. Congressman Childers sent a letter to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack discussing the negative implications of the rule to terminate base acres on federal land, especially at a time when state and local governments are already facing severe financial stress (February 2009). Ultimately, the USDA decided to rescind this rule (April 2009).

### Honoring Our Veterans

- Providing Earned Benefits. Congress recently passed several pieces of legislation affecting veterans' benefits, including a veterans' compensation cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), an expansion of emergency treatment eligibility, and the reauthorization of important homeless veterans reintegration programs (March 2009). In the 110th session, Congress passed a landmark expansion of G.I. benefits (June 2008), as well as legislation to improve rural veterans' access to health care (September 2008).

- Ensuring Access to Affordable Health Care. Congressman Childers joined colleagues in sending a letter to the White House opposing a proposal that would allow the VA to bill veterans' private health insurance companies for treatment of service-related injuries and disabilities. Just hours after receiving the letter, the White House met with veteran and military service organization leaders and decided to drop the proposal (March 2009).

### Protecting American Rights

- Second Amendment Task Force. Congressman Childers was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force (SATF), and joined fellow members in sending a letter to both the President and the Speaker in opposition to any future attempt to reinstate a ban on the sale of inaccurately described "assault weapons" (March 2009).

- Second Amendment Enforcement Act. Last year, Congressman Childers introduced, and the House passed, the bipartisan Second Amendment Enforcement Act to restore the American right to bear arms and overturn Washington, D.C.'s gun control laws, which the city enacted in defiance of a Supreme Court ruling. While this bill pertains to the citizens of D.C., it also sets a national precedent for the protection of Americans' Second Amendment rights. (September 2008)

- Cracking Down on Illegal Immigration. Congressman Childers met with representatives of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the U.S.-Mexico border to gain first-hand knowledge about the challenges facing U.S. border security (August 2008). He also introduced, and Congress passed, bipartisan legislation to ensure that employment funding authorized by the National Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act goes directly to American citizens (July 2008). In

addition, the Congressman worked directly with DHS to permanently station Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in North Mississippi (August 2008).

#### Providing Access to Quality, Affordable Health Care

- Cutting Costs, Improving Access. To provide specific objectives and guidelines for the health care reform debate, Congressman Childers joined his fellow members of the Blue Dog Health Care Task Force in supporting principles that look for savings within our current system, help reduce high costs for small businesses, and address challenges specific to rural communities (May 2009).

- Insuring our Children. Congress reauthorized and extended the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to nearly triple Mississippi's share of SCHIP funds, preserve coverage for the more than 81,000 Mississippi children who are already enrolled, and extend coverage to almost half of those who are currently uninsured. The reauthorized program also uses a more accurate formula to ensure that funding goes to states like Mississippi where families need it the most, and includes restrictions to prevent wealthier states from abusing funds. (February 2009)

#### Promoting American Energy Independence

- Six-Point Energy Plan. To help address American's energy concerns, Congressman Childers laid out a six-point energy plan to provide immediate relief for North Mississippians facing skyrocketing prices at the pump and offer long-term solutions to our nation's energy crisis. To move particular parts of this plan into law, he introduced legislation that extends tax credits to consumers who purchase fuel efficient vehicles. (July 2008)

A pro-gun, pro-life Mississippian, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) represents the First Congressional District in North Mississippi. He is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition and serves on the House Agriculture and Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers co-chairs the reestablished bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus and was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force. For more information, visit <http://www.childers.house.gov/>.

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